

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-32 (Cancelled).

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin, comprising
feeding an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into an ~~extruder.~~ extruder,
keeping the temperature of the melting resin in the extruder at 70 to 170°C,
adjusting an amount of water by supplying or removing water in the extruder, and
discharging the copolymer resin having a water content right after being discharged of
5 to 40 weight %,

wherein ~~the washing water is~~ supplied to the extruder ~~is a washing water~~ for washing
the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin, the resin is washed by the washing water, ~~the~~
~~washing water is discharged and then water is removed~~ in a liquid state from at least one
place downstream from ~~[[a]]~~ the washing water supply portion, and residue of saponification
catalyst contained at the time of production of the resin is removed.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 33, wherein the
residue of saponification catalyst contained in the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin fed
into the extruder is an alkali metal ion and the content of the ion is 0.1 to 5 weight % based
on metal.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim ~~[[33]]~~ 34, wherein
the content of alkali metal ion contained in the washed ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer
resin is 0.05 weight % or less based on metal.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 33, wherein the washing water is an aqueous solution of acid having a pKa of 3.5 or more at 25°C.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin, comprising
feeding an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into an extruder,
keeping the temperature of the melting resin in the extruder at 70 to 170°C,
adjusting an amount of water by supplying or removing water in the extruder, and
discharging the copolymer resin having a water content right after being discharged of
5 to 40 weight %,

wherein ~~a method for~~ said removing water removes water in the form of liquid water or vapor water from a water-containing ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin, and the water is removed from at least one place of the extruder ~~in at least one state selected from the group consisting of liquid water and vapor water.~~

Claim 38 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 37, wherein ~~the method for~~ said removing water uses at least one selected from the group consisting of a dewatering slit and a dewatering hole.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin, comprising
feeding an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into an extruder,
keeping the temperature of the melting resin in the extruder at 70 to 170°C,
adjusting an amount of water by supplying or removing water in the extruder, and

discharging the copolymer resin having a water content right after being discharged of 5 to 40 weight %,

comprising feeding a pellet of the resin into the extruder while keeping the entire water content of the pellet at the time of feeding the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into the extruder at 0.5 to 70 weight %, and the rate of a surface water of the pellet of the resin at less than 10 weight %.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 39, wherein the method for feeding the pellet is a volumetric feeding method in which the pellet is fed into the extruder by using a volumetric feeder.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 39, wherein the temperature of the melting resin inside the extruder is in the range of 90 to 140°C.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 39, wherein the water content of the resin composition right after being discharged is in the range of 15 to 30 weight %.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 39, wherein an ethylene content in the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin is in the range of 3 to 70 mol%, and the saponification degree is in the range of 80 to 100 mol%.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): An ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet, produced by feeding an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into an extruder, keeping the melting temperature of the resin in the extruder at 70 to 170°C, adjusting an amount of water

by supplying or removing water in the extruder, discharging the copolymer having a water content right after being discharged is 5 to 40 weight %, and then cutting the discharged ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin after being discharged from the extruder and drying the cut product until the water content is 1 weight % or less, wherein no spherocrystals are observed in the center of the cross section of the resin pellet when the cross section is observed by the use of polarization microscope with a magnification of 600.

Claim 45 (Currently Amended): An ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet, produced by feeding an ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin into an extruder, keeping the melting temperature of the resin in the extruder at 70 to 170°C, adjusting an amount of water by supplying or removing water in the extruder, discharging the copolymer having a water content right after being discharged is 5 to 40 weight %, and then cutting the discharged ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin after being discharged from the extruder and drying the cut product until the water content is 1 weight % or less, wherein the angle of repose is 23°C or less when the resin pellets are piled.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): An ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet, exhibiting no spherocrystals in a center of a cross-section when observed by use of a polarization microscope with a magnification of 600.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 46, wherein at least one additive selected from the group consisting of a carboxylic acid, a boron compound, a phosphoric acid compound, an alkali metal salt, and an alkali earth metal salt is added to the pellets.

Claim 48 (Currently Amended): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 47, wherein the carboxylic acid is present and is at least one selected from the group consisting of acetic acid and lactic acid.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 47, wherein the content of alkali metal ion contained in the pellets is 0.05 weight % or less based on metal.

Claim 50 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 47, wherein an ethylene content in the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer is in the range of 3 to 70 mol%, and the saponification degree is in the range of 80 to 100 mol%.

Claim 51 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 47, wherein the water content of the pellets is 1 weight % or less.

Claim 52 (Previously Presented): An ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet, exhibiting an angle of repose of 23° or less when piled.

Claim 53 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 52, wherein at least one additive selected from the group consisting of a carboxylic acid, a boron compound, a phosphoric acid compound, an alkali metal salt, and an alkali earth metal salt is added to the pellets.

Claim 54 (Currently Amended): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 53, wherein the carboxylic acid is present and is at least one selected from the group consisting of acetic acid and lactic acid.

Claim 55 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 53, wherein the content of alkali metal ion contained in the pellets is 0.05 weight % or less based on metal.

Claim 56 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 53, wherein an ethylene content in the ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer is in the range of 3 to 70 mol%, and the saponification degree is in the range of 80 to 100 mol%.

Claim 57 (Previously Presented): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 53, wherein the water content of the pellets is 1 weight % or less.

Claim 58 (New): The process according to claim 37, wherein the water is removed from at least one place of the extruder in the liquid state.

Claim 59 (New): The method according to claim 39, wherein the adjusting includes removing water from the extruder.

Claim 60 (New): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 44, wherein the amount of water is adjusted by removing water from the extruder.

Claim 61 (New): The ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin pellet according to claim 45, wherein the amount of water is adjusted by removing water from the extruder.

DISCUSSION OF AMENDMENT

The specification has been amended to correct typographical errors, as supported throughout the specification.

The claims have been amended by inserting the word --resin-- after “copolymer”, and by changing the dependency of Claim 35 to Claim 34, for antecedent basis purposes, and by correcting typographical errors. Claim 37 has also been shortened by deleting superfluous matter.

New Claims 58-61 have been added, and are supported by the previous claims.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 33-61 are now pending in the application.